



City of Bloomington Environmental Commission

The mission of the Environmental Commission is to advise the City of Bloomington on how its actions and policies may preserve and enhance the quality of Bloomington's environment, including the life-supporting processes that natural ecological systems provide to humans and other organisms.

MINUTES

21 April 2016

City Hall McCloskey Room, 401 North Morton Street

1. Introductions: welcome new commissioners (7:00-7:05 p.m.)

Present: Linda Thompson, Chad Roeder, Andy Marrs, Kriste Lindberg, Dave Debikey, Mike Litwin, Sarah Green, Alicia Reinersman, David Parkhurst, Nick Kappas, Dedaimia Whitney, Chris Neggers, Wendy Read Wertz

Absent: Chaim Julian

Guests: Caryn Hojnicky, IU Athletics Sustainability Coordinator; Jana McGee, BCOS

The EC has two new commissioners:

- Chris Neggers is a forester who has worked for the Nature Conservancy in Indiana for over five years, managing the Working Woodlands Program. Prior to moving to Indiana, he was a consulting forester in North Carolina for seven years.
- Wendy Read Wertz is originally from England and lived in Saudi Arabia for 18 years. She helped found the first environmental commission in Saudi Arabia and worked on nature and wildlife rehabilitation. She also wrote the biography of Lynton Kieth Caldwell, a writer of the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act.

2. Approval of minutes (7:05-7:10 p.m.)

- Unanimously approved by voice vote

3. Public comment (7:10-7:30 p.m.)

- No members of the public were present to comment

4. Presentation: Caryn Hojnicky, "IU Athletics recycling and the Master Recycler Program" (7:30-8:00)

Caryn became the Athletics Sustainability Coordinator at IU about a year ago and has worked on many waste reduction initiatives on campus in this time. Working on a zero-waste goal for IU, Caryn initiated a compost pilot program during the 2015-16 school year. As part of the "No Bin Left Behind" project, Caryn audited desk-side bins to ensure that every landfill bin is paired with a recycling bin. She is currently auditing waste containers to determine how many are in Athletics and what they look like.

Over a year ago, IU Athletics partnered with JB Salvage and Green Earth Recycle and Compost to begin composting food waste as part of the pilot program. JB Salvage transports the food waste to Green Earth, where it gets composted. The composting pilot program began in the Hoosier Room, where faculty and student athletes eat. Athletics collected pre-consumer waste from the kitchen, and student athletes and staff collected post-consumer waste. For the first week of the program, Caryn and the Athletics Green Team instructed people about how to dispose of their waste relative to the waste type (i.e., landfill, recycle, or compost).

To reduce waste further, IU participated in Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Game Day Challenges. IU Athletics purchased and set up bins for "Zero Waste Stations" in the stadium. Due to funding limitations, however, they only collected waste in the concourse. They designated red bins for

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landfill, green for recycle, and yellow for compost. IU Athletics had “Zero Waste Educators” stationed at various points throughout the concourse to inform people about how to properly dispose of their waste. Only napkins, food waste, and cardboard food and drink trays were allowed in the compost bin.

The first EPA Game Day Challenge was on October 3rd, and IU Athletics recruited the IUPUI Student Sustainability Council for assistance. IU placed 19th overall in pounds recycled, 3rd in recycled pounds per capita in the Big Ten, and 4th for GHG and organics reduction in the Big Ten. 1.54 tons of food waste were composted, and 5.575 tons of waste was recycled. During this game, IU Athletics diverted 29.8 percent of its waste from landfills, which was the second highest of the home games. The highest game had a 30 percent diversion rate.

To determine how much game day waste could be diverted from landfills, Caryn and volunteers audited two dumpsters for two weekends. She and volunteers weighed every bag in the dumpsters, emptied the bags’ contents, sorted the waste by material into the appropriate bags, and re-weighed the bags. From this audit, Caryn learned that the potential diversion rate was between 79 and 80 percent over the two games. Between August and December, this pilot program diverted 12 tons of compost from the landfill.

Caryn is interested in beginning a Master Recycler Program in Bloomington as well. She became a Master Recycler in Portland and has been educating the public since. She spoke with representatives of the Center for Sustainable Living about creating a similar program in Bloomington, and they were interested. The Citizens’ Advisory Committee also expressed interest. In Portland, the program holds one three-hour course each week for eight weeks. Typically, about 30 students are enrolled in each course. Caryn needs contact information of people who are willing to teach a similar course and create a new Master Recycler Manual. The group that creates the manual could be the first class.

5. Committee reports & discussions (electronic)

6. Reports from 2016 working groups (5 minutes each)

A. BEAP (Alicia)	F. Hazards (Dedaimia)
B. Biodiversity (Andy)	G. Land use (Linda)
C. Commons charter (Ryan)	H. Tree Commission (Dedaimia)
D. Eco Heroes (Sarah)	I. Waste (Dave D)
E. Food and Agriculture (Dave P)	J. Water policy (Mike)

BEAP

Alicia and BEAP subcommittee members began meeting with City officials to get feedback on chapters from the plan.

- Buildings and Energy: Alicia and Andy met with Jacqui Bauer, City of Bloomington Sustainability Coordinator, at the end of March. She generally approved of the chapter, but she recommended incorporating action items about insulating attics and providing more energy consumption information to renters.
- Water: Alicia and Nick met with Rachel Atz, City of Bloomington Water Quality Coordinator. She agreed with the existing content in this chapter, but recommended expansions to discuss wastewater treatment along with lead and copper pipe testing.
- Transportation: Alicia and Dedaimia met with Lew May, Bloomington Transit Director. In this meeting, Alicia and Dedaimia learned that the biggest impediment to increasing bus service is funding. A local option income tax would help fund future expansions, but state legislators resist the idea of increasing taxes. The EC can promote a local option income tax by writing a letter to state representatives.

Biodiversity

- This group focuses on the Mayors’ Monarch Pledge. This group has had several meetings with City staff to determine what the City is currently doing to promote monarchs and recommend actions. This group developed a report suggesting action items.
- Andy wants to recruit additional members.

Commons Charter

- Dedaimia is taking over this working group in the short-term. The group is in its initial stages and is focused on defining terms.

Eco Heroes

- Sarah received about 85 entries. Because some of the entries were class projects, about 150 students participated in the competition.
- Sarah received about \$1,500 in cash and prizes for the competition.
- The awards ceremony will be Saturday, April 23rd at 10am in the Council Chambers.

Food and Agriculture

- This group is currently working through the Bloomington Food Policy Council, where the main focus is on forming a food hub in Bloomington.

Hazards

- This group has not done any work yet and might merge with the biodiversity group.

Land-use:

- Mother Bear's Pizza: moved their building plans three feet to stay out of the contour line that defines the sinkhole. They still need a variance because they are going to encroach in the easement, but they changed the direction of their water run-off.
- Chocolate Moose: there is a proposal to tear down the Chocolate Moose and a couple other buildings in lieu of a new, multi-use building.
- Jordan River culvert: this culvert goes underneath a property and parking lot area. Plans are underway to re-pave the lot and move the culvert. When utilities moves the culvert, they will dig it up and put in permeable pavers.
- Sign Ordinance: the United States Supreme court ruled that many sign regulations are unconstitutional. As a result, no signs can be restricted based on content, and no signs are allowed in public right-of-ways anymore. The City Council passed a sign ordinance in response, making Bloomington one of the first cities to address this issue following the Supreme Court ruling.

Tree Commission:

- Dedaimia is recruiting Chris to the Tree Commission.
- The Tree Commission is working on a set of guidelines for contractors to protect trees.
- Dedaimia is drafting a letter to send out to homeowners if their trees are violating the law.

Waste:

- Dave D. recruited new interns.
- The waste group is interested in conducting composting and materials recovery facility feasibility studies to the workload.
- The group started surveying downtown businesses about expanding recycling.
- The group discussed a potential Master Recycler Program, which is being spearheaded by the CSL.
- Three City Council members are considering ordinance changes to provide recycling to apartment complexes.
- Chad has been working with Strategic Materials to determine how feasible it would be to get a glass crusher to create asphalt aggregates.

Water:

- This group plans to participate in the Adopt-a-Stream program.

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- Utilities is creating on stormwater educational brochures with an IU service learning class.
- Greywater is a complicated topic because state laws do not explicitly address it. The group needs to research this issue to begin a potential project.

7. New business (8:55-9:10 p.m.)

A. EC and the GPP, old and new (Nick)

- Vote to write a letter to the Planning Director for the EC to be included in the GPP process:
Unanimous approval by voice vote

This updated plan was first drafted by the Planning Department in City Hall and given to the mayor. He recommended expansions in line with his campaign platform. The document was contracted out to Ratio in Indianapolis. There is no firm deadline for this plan's completion.

8. Commissioner announcements (9:10-9:30 p.m.)

- Dedaimia: There will be a meeting at Rhino's on Tuesday, April 26th at 6:30pm to discuss the future of Bloomingfoods.
- David: ERAC met, and David will write a report.
- Mike: The Indiana Recycling Coalition Food Scrap Initiative is meeting on Wednesday, April 27th. Mike plans to attend.
- Kriste: The annual Sassafras Audubon Society bird feeder cleaning will be held on Saturday, April 23rd.
- Andy: registered for the adopt-an-acre program to remove invasive species. Andy has to go twice a month. Email him if interested in participating.
- Linda: the mayor will be announcing a new environmental protection plan at 1:45pm at City Hall on Friday, April 22nd.

9. Adjournment

Meeting times

- A. Environmental Commission: 19 May, 7:00 p.m., McCloskey Room, City Hall
- B. Planning Committee: 5 May, 4:00 p.m., Lemon Room, City Hall
- C. Tree Commission: 18 May, 9:30 a.m., Bryan Park
- D. BCOS meeting: 10 May, 6:00 p.m., McCloskey Room, City Hall
- E. EQAS Commission: 11 May, 5:30-7:00 p.m., Nat U. Hill III Room, Courthouse
- F. ERAC: 8 June, 4:30 p.m., TBD
- G. MCSWMD Board: 12 May, 4:00 p.m., Nat Hill III Room, Courthouse
- H. MCSWMD CAC: 19 May, 5:15 p.m., McCloskey Room, City Hall